



**Borough of Okehampton**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

**On the Health  
Of the District  
For the Year  
1968**

**PRESENTED BY**

**The Medical Officer of Health**

**AND**

**The Public Health Inspector  
and Surveyor**



## HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEES

*Chairman :*

COUNCILLOR A. J. CROCKER

*Vice-Chairman :*

COUNCILLOR E. H. RAE

*Members :*

ALDERMEN: F. A. PARTRIDGE, C. E. W. WHITE

COUNCILLORS: M. G. R. DANIEL, R. GEE, C. G. JONES, W. T. LETCHFORD,  
MRS. M. A. NASH, P. N. SMART, R. R. TAYLOR, P. D. WOODGATE

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## PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

*Medical Officer of Health :*

MARY E. BUDDING, M.B., B.Ch., B.Sc., D.P.H.

*Public Health Inspector and Surveyor :*

T. F. BENNETT, M.A.P.H.I., A.I.P.H.E.

*Assistants to Public Health Inspector and Surveyor :*

E. J. N. FURSE

N. F. WESTON

*Clerk to the Medical Officer of Health :*

MISS E. M. HAMBLY, S.R.N. (part-time)

Devon County Council Clinic, 70 Plymouth Road, Tavistock  
(Telephone: Tavistock 2617)

## BOROUGH OF OKEHAMPTON

### Annual Report on the Health of the Area during 1968

MR. MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS,

I beg to present herewith the Annual Report on the Health of the Borough during 1968, in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Health Circular 1/69 dated January, 1969. Included in the Report is the Report of your Public Health Inspector and Surveyor.

The estimated population, mid-year, showed an increase of twenty compared with 1967. The Standardised Birth Rate of 14.1 per 1,000 population remains almost the same as 1967 (14.2) but is lower than the National Rate of 16.9 (17.2 in 1967). The Standardised Death Rate of 11.9 per 1,000 population is slightly higher than that of 1967 (11.2) but is the same as the National Rate.

The general health of the Borough remains good. During early summer measles immunisation was started and this may account for the low number (six) of notifications received during the autumn, normally an epidemic time of year.

It is to be hoped that the economic situation will permit reopening the whole question of replacement of the existing Sewage Disposal Works in the foreseeable future.

Finally, I should like to thank the Mayor, Aldermen, Councillors and Staff, for their continued consideration and support.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

Your obedient servant,

MARY E. BUDDING,

*Medical Officer of Health.*

## SECTION 'A'

### General Statistics

Area (statute acres) ... ..	786
Population – 1951 census ... ..	3,899
Population – 1961 census ... ..	3,864
Estimated home population – mid-1968 ... ..	3,830
Number of inhabited dwellings ... ..	1,358
Rateable Value ... ..	£124,389
Product of the Penny Rate ... ..	£493
Loan debt ... ..	£438,144

### Vital Statistics

LIVE BIRTHS	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate ... ..	29	17	46
Illegitimate ... ..	2	—	2
			—
			48
			==

DEATHS ... ..	31	40	71
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LIVE BIRTHS	<i>England and Wales</i>	
Number ... ..	48	
Crude Rate per 1,000 population ... ..	12.5	16.9
Standardised Birth Rate ... ..	14.1	
ILLEGITIMATE LIVE BIRTHS (per cent of total live births) ... ..	4.2%	
STILL BIRTHS		
Number ... ..	Nil	
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births ... ..	—	14
TOTAL LIVE AND STILL BIRTHS ... ..	48	
INFANT DEATHS (deaths under 1 year) ... ..	1	
INFANT MORTALITY RATES (deaths under 1 year of age)		
Infant deaths per 1,000 total live births ... ..	21	18
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births ... ..	21.7	
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births ... ..	—	
NEONATAL MORTALITY RATE (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)	21	12.3
EARLY NEONATAL MORTALITY RATE (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)	—	10.5
PERINATAL MORTALITY RATE (still births and deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live and still births) ... ..	—	25.
MATERNAL MORTALITY (including abortion)		
Number of deaths ... ..	Nil	
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births ... ..	—	
DEATHS		
Number ... ..	71	
Crude death rate per 1,000 population ... ..	18.5	11.9
Standardised death rate ... ..	11.9	



POPULATION					<i>Mid-Year</i>	<i>Birth</i>	<i>Death</i>
<i>Year</i>					<i>Population</i>	<i>Rate</i>	<i>Rate</i>
1964	...	...	...	...	3,840	16.4	23.5
1965	...	...	...	...	3,840	14.3	21.4
1966	...	...	...	...	3,810	15.7	19.2
1967	...	...	...	...	3,810	12.6	16.8
1968	...	...	...	...	3,830	12.5	18.5

The chief causes of death were as follows :

Malignant Neoplasms	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Leukaemia	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Diabetes Mellitus	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Heart diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	23
Cerebrovascular disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
Other diseases of the circulatory system	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Bronchitis and emphysema	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Peptic Ulcer	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Intestinal obstruction and hernia	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Other diseases, genito-urinary system	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Ill-defined conditions	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Accidents	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
TOTAL (all causes)							71

AGE AT DEATH TABLE

<i>Age</i>					<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Under 4 weeks	...	...	...	...	1	—
4 weeks and under 1 year	...	...	...	...	—	—
1 —	...	...	...	...	—	—
5 —	...	...	...	...	—	—
15 —	...	...	...	...	—	—
25 —	...	...	...	...	—	—
35 —	...	...	...	...	—	—
45 —	...	...	...	...	2	1
55 —	...	...	...	...	8	1
65 —	...	...	...	...	12	10
75 and over	...	...	...	...	8	28
					31	40

SECTION 'B'

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

1. Hospitals

There are two hospitals in the town. The Memorial Hospital (including maternity beds) and the Castle Hospital (for chronic sick and Geriatric cases). Both of these serve the town and also the large rural area outside the town.

2. County Council Health Services

Under the National Health Service Act, 1946, the County Council provides the following services (based largely on the Okehampton Health Centre (Okehampton 2231) in the grounds of the Memorial Hospital, also providing accommodation for the General Practitioners in the town); Domiciliary Midwifery, Home Nursing, Health Visitors supervisory care of expectant and

nursing mothers and children under 5, School Medical Service, Home Help Services, Chiropody, Occupation Therapy, Speech Therapy, Dental Service for children up to school-leaving age, expectant and nursing mothers; Mental Health Service, Vaccination and Immunisation procedures. A Cervical Cytology Clinic for early detection of cervical cancer was started during 1967.

The Ambulance Service is run under delegated powers by the St. John Ambulance Brigade, providing a 24-hour cover for the whole district.

Also, the Orthopaedic Clinic is held each Monday on the premises.

3. Meals on Wheels

Mrs. M. Campbell, the Organiser of the W.R.V.S service, reports that during 1968 2,401 meals were prepared and delivered to 26 houses, i.e. 2 married couples, 20 women, and 4 men. As soon as Tenby House is available a Luncheon Club will be opened there on certain days and the service will expand to cook for and deliver to those living in part of the rural area.

4. War Memorial Hospital Maternity Unit

During the year a total of 88 babies were born in the hospital:

Okehampton Borough	...	...	...	...	26
Okehampton Rural District	...	...	...	...	52
Other districts	...	...	...	...	10
					<hr/> 88 <hr/>

Fifty-four per cent of the total births which occurred in the Okehampton Borough took place in the hospital.

5. Laboratory Services

Bacteriological examinations of specimens and of samples of milk, water, ice cream, etc., are carried out at the Public Health Laboratory at Exeter, and any chemical analyses by the Public Analyst at Exeter.

6. Mass Radiography Unit

The Unit continued to visit every other week throughout the year, as advertised in the local press. A total of 359 were X-rayed with results as follows:

	Male	Female	Total
Total number X-rayed	202	157	359
<i>Abnormalities</i>			
Tuberculosis requiring treatment...	—	—	—
Tuberculosis requiring observation	2	—	2
Tuberculosis inactive	2	2	4
Bronchitis and Emphysema	1	—	1
Pulmonary fibrosis	2	—	2
Pleural thickening	—	1	1
Cardio-Vascular disease acquired	3	1	4
Pulmonary infections	1	3	4
Residual fibrosis	—	1	1
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TOTAL ABNORMALITIES	11	8	19
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SECTION 'C'

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Water Supply Sources

Mr. E. A. Robb, the Chief Engineer of the North Devon Water Board, has kindly supplied the following information of his Board's progress during the year:

"The supply for the Borough is obtained from intakes on the Black-a-Ven and Red-a-Ven rivers with treatment, filtration and sterilization of the raw water, at Brackentor works. New chemical metering pumps installed at the treatment works has enabled a greater quantity of water to be satisfactorily treated, this enables the Borough to obtain its supply at all times from Brackentor, whereas previously Okehampton's supply was augmented from Belstone works.

Mains renewals have been carried out and mains laid to supply new housing and other developments.

Chemical and bacteriological samples have been taken throughout the period and were satisfactory at all times. The quantity and quality of the supply were maintained to a high standard at all times. Hosepipe restrictions were *not* applied within the Borough."

The following samples were taken during the year:

			<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>
Brackentor works	...		7	—
Borough	...	...	17	—
			—	—
			24	—
			==	==

Rainfall figures

Rainfall figures for the past five years as follows:

			<i>1968</i>	<i>1967</i>	<i>1966</i>	<i>1965</i>	<i>1964</i>
			—	—	—	—	—
Cranmere	...	...		98.88	92.75	97.95	68.00
Newbridge	...	...		83.57	68.30	75.60	53.50
Filter Station	...		52.24	64.52	61.43	59.02	41.26
Pleasure Gardens	...		50.15	61.29	60.17	62.03	41.57
Dry Days (no rain)	...		159	139	130	147	178

The driest months were May and November and the wettest June, July and December; and the heaviest rainfalls were 27th June 1.25 inches, 8th January 1.24 inches, and 24th December 1.10 inches.

Sewerage

Despite continued pressure, restriction on capital expenditure has prevented any progress towards the realisation of a modern disposal works for the Borough. Previous annual reports have deplored the lack of this basic facility and the Council have continued to press the Ministry to approve a scheme.

It is hoped that the coming year will bring material progress towards its provision so that adequate disposal arrangements can be available to provide not only for the existing population but for the development growth taking place.

Public Conveniences

Two main toilet blocks are now available to the public, one near the main car park which is much used by visitors.

Every effort is made to maintain these in a clean and hygienic condition and damage by vandals has, generally, not been a great problem although wall "artists" are a regular cause of offence and expenditure.



Rodent Control

Treatments of the sewer systems have again been carried out by the Council's staff in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. In this way effective control of rat infestation in the sewers is ensured and very little infestation has in fact been found during the year.

Eight complaints have been received and dealt with.

Refuse Colletion and Disposal

The domestic refuse collection arrangements in the Borough continue to operate satisfactorily providing for one collection per week from all domestic premises.

Since the national outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease last year, all refuse has continued to be burnt at the disposal tip, thus minimising any potential danger from this source and at the same time providing the most effective method of disposal and control.

Frequent inspections continue to be made and very few problems from either rat or fly infestation have been encountered during the year, however periodic test treatments are carried out as a precautionary measure.

Inspection of the District and Public Health Services

The number of complaints regarding public health matters received, recorded and dealt with during the year was twelve.

The following table sets out the inspections carried out during the year.

	<i>Number of Inspections</i>	<i>Number of Informal Notices Served</i>	<i>Number of Informal Notices Complied With</i>
Housing ... ..	112	9	9
Drainage ... ..	41	3	3
Food Premises ... ..	30	3	3
Public Conveniences ... ..	28	—	—
Sewerage ... ..	69	—	—
Water Supply ... ..	2	—	—
Rivers ... ..	5	—	—
Refuse Disposal ... ..	53	—	—
Rodent Control ... ..	27	1	1
Moveable Dwellings ... ..	3	1	1
Schools ... ..	—	—	—
Infectious Diseases ... ..	—	—	—
Petroleum Acts ... ..	15	—	—
Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act ... ..	12	12	10
Factories ... ..	13	—	—
Miscellaneous ... ..	196	—	—
TOTAL ... ..	606	29	27

Factories Act, 1961

Details of inspections carried out in accordance with the Factories Act, 1961, are set out in the tables which follow.

INSPECTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF PROVISIONS AS TO HEALTH  
(including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors)

<i>Premises</i>	<i>Number on Register</i>	<i>Number of</i>		
		<i>Inspection</i>	<i>Written Notices</i>	<i>Occupiers Prosecuted</i>
Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	3	1	—	—
Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ... ..	41	14	—	—
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises) ...	9	2	—	—
TOTAL ...	53	17	—	—

2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	Number of Cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which Prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			to H.M. Inspector	by H.M. Inspector	
Want of Cleanliness ...	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable Temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation ...	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors ...	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences :					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	2	1	—	2	—
(c) Not separate for the sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences (not including outwork) ...	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ...	2	1	—	2	—

3. OUT-WORK (Sections 133 and 134)

<i>Nature of Work</i>	SECTION 133			SECTION 134		
	<i>Number of Out-Workers in August list required by Section 133 (1) (c)</i>	<i>Number of cases of default in sending lists to Council</i>	<i>Number of prosecutions for failure to supply lists</i>	<i>Number of instances of work in unwholesome premises</i>	<i>Notices served</i>	<i>Prosecutions</i>
<i>Wearing Apparel (Making, etc.) ...</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—

## SECTION 'D'

### HOUSING

#### Town and Country Planning and Building Regulations

Applications for permission to develop under the Town and Country Planning Acts, Advertisement Regulations, Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act and the Building Regulations have been received over the past twelve months as follows:

Alterations and Conversions	...	...	...	...	25
Advertisement Signs	...	...	...	...	14
Public Works	...	...	...	...	1
New Dwellings	...	...	...	...	15
Garages	...	...	...	...	36
Caravan Sites	...	...	...	...	2 (1 renewal)
Industrial and Shop Premises	...	...	...	...	13

Of the above nine applications have been refused.

#### Private Enterprise

Ten new houses were erected by private enterprise during the year.

#### Improvement Grants

Eight applications for Standard Improvement Grants under the provisions of the House Purchase and Housing Act, 1959, as amended by the Housing Acts, 1961 and 1964, were received and approved. Four have been completed during the year.

#### Council Housing

##### NEW HOUSES

During the year work has commenced on a scheme for seventy-five dwellings and fifty garages at Moyses Meadow, High Street. The first of the completed dwellings should become ready for occupation early in the new year.

Each house and bungalow will be provided with full central heating, either by gas or electricity, and are the first Council houses to be so provided in the Borough.

#### Maintenance and Repairs

Normal maintenance and repairs have been carried out during the year and the majority, except electrical repairs, have been carried out by the Council's maintenance staff.

Repairs are carried out as speedily as possible and during the year 293 reports were received and/or dealt with

## SECTION 'E'

### INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

#### Food Premises

The number of food premises falling within the provisions of the Food Hygiene Regulations are as follows:

Grocers	...	...	...	...	...	13
Greengrocers	...	...	...	...	...	6
Confectioners	...	...	...	...	...	4
Bread and Cakes	...	...	...	...	...	4
Meat Shops	...	...	...	...	...	7
Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	...	3
Milk Shops	...	...	...	...	...	1
Dairies	...	...	...	...	...	2
Hotels and Bars	...	...	...	...	...	9
Cafes	...	...	...	...	...	6



Ice Cream and Preserved Foods

The number of premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, is as follows:

Ice Cream ... ..	26
Preparation or manufacture of sausage or potted or pressed, pickled or preserved food intended for sale ... ..	7

Unsound Food

Fourteen certificates for unsound food were issued during the year and 627 lb. of miscellaneous food stuffs condemned.

Slaughterhouses

There are no slaughterhouses being used in the Borough.

Slaughter of Animals Act, 1958

Applications were received for licences or renewal of licences to slaughter, and in all three cases were granted.

Poultry Packing Premises

There are two premises within the Borough where poultry is slaughtered and processed.

SECTION 'F'

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

Tuberculosis

Three new cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified (two male and one female).

The Register stands as follows:

<i>Pulmonary</i>		<i>Non-Pulmonary</i>	
<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
8	4	NIL	NIL

Infectious Diseases Notified by Medical Practitioners

		<i>Measles</i>		<i>Whooping Cough</i>		<i>Pneumonia</i>	
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Under 1	...	—	1	—	1	—	—
1 —	...	1	—	—	—	—	—
2 —	...	1	—	—	—	—	—
3 —	...	—	—	—	—	—	—
4 —	...	2	—	—	—	—	—
5 — 9	...	—	1	—	—	—	—
10 — 14	...	—	—	—	—	—	—
15 — 24	...	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 +	...	—	—	—	—	1	—
Unknown age	...	—	—	—	—	—	1
TOTAL ...		4	2	—	1	1	1

### **Brucella Abortus**

A sample of raw milk produced and retailed in the Borough was found to be positive. The owner was contacted and was immediately co-operative, retailed all his milk pasteurised, (and therefore rendered safe,) until tests showed which cows were infected. Two were found to be positive and were eliminated from the herd before the raw milk was retailed again.

### **Food Poisoning**

No cases were notified.



